



Connecticut Vineyard and Winery Association

195 Farmington Ave., Suite 200 · Farmington, CT 06032 · 860 677 5467 · Fax 860 677 8418 · www.ctwine.com

Testimony Regarding:

H.B. No. 5745 AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC PRICING SYSTEMS AND THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR

General Law Committee

February 8, 2011

Members of the General Law Committee, my name is Jamie Jones and my family owns the Jones Family Farms and Winery in Shelton. Due to business matters I am unable to deliver this testimony in person, but it is very important to vineyards across the State. I am the President of the Connecticut Vineyard and Winery Association (CVWA). We are a private, non-profit association of twenty (20) farm wineries from around the state. Our goal is to promote the cultivation of grapes, spread awareness of the quality wines being produced in our state and market our businesses through the Connecticut Wine Trail brochure and our website. Together our farms comprise over 2000 acres of open space and our businesses received 500,000 visits from travelers searching for local wines. We are an important part of both Connecticut's beautiful landscape and local economy. I come before you today to voice our concerns regarding HB 5745 An Act Concerning Electronic Pricing Systems and the Sale of Alcoholic Liquor.

The bill prohibits the sale of alcohol with an electronic pricing system unless the system requires the seller to verify that the age of the consumer. Although we always check the identification of our consumers, our electronic pricing systems may not prompt us to do so. There are many other "affirmative defense" mechanism a purveyor can use, such as a signature card to ensure they are selling to a consumer 21 years of age or older. If this bill were to pass, many would need to invest in completely new computer systems or retrofit their existing systems which would be very costly. Although the intent of this bill is good, we ask you to pause and consider the impact on small businesses such as Connecticut vineyards who may not be able to afford this type of technology. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.